V. HEFS GENERAL INFORMATION

A. HOURS OF OPERATION FOR HEFS

Hours of operation are Monday through Friday, 8:30 am to 5: 00 pm. Effective June 1, 2007 through September 30, 2007, the HEFS hours of operation are as follows:

- Counselors are available to meet with clients between 8:30 am and 5:00 pm on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, by appointment. Estimated wait-time for walk-in clients may be one hour or more during this busy period. Please contact the SEO at 202-727-2824 to make an appointment.

- Tuesday and Thursday are application-processing days. Counselors will not be available to meet or speak with clients.

- Clients may hand-deliver supporting documents Monday through Friday. HEFS staff must provide receipts for acceptable documents provided. If you do not receive a receipt for documents provided, please contact the HEFS management listed in section B, HEFS Staff.

B. HEFS STAFF

Applicants that submit their DC OneApp online should direct all questions to their assigned counselor [see below]. Counselors may be reached by telephone at (202) 727-2824

Student Last Name	Counselor Name	E-mail Address
A	Stephanie Thomas	stephanie.thomas@dc.gov
B	Kim Celay	kim.goodman-celay@dc.gov
C-D	Melanie Fleming	melanie.fleming@dc.gov
E-G	Terrance McCreary	terrance.mccreary@dc.gov
H-I	Abay Awash	abay.awash@dc.gov
J	Joan Grammont	joan.grammont@dc.gov
K	Emilia Del Arroyo	emilia.delarroyo@dc.gov
L	Temple Huff	temple.huff@dc.gov
M	Sylvia Mansfield	sylvia.mansfield@dc.gov
N-O	Laurencia Henderson	laurencia.henderson@dc.gov
P-Q	Tanya Cunningham	tanya.cunningham@dc.gov
R	Kadidia Thiero	kadidia.thiero@dc.gov
S-T	Pamela Pinkett	pamela.pinkett@dc.gov
U-Z	Zecketia Coleman	zecketia.coleman@dc.gov

Clients are also encouraged to contact HEFS Management for further assistance, if necessary:

Sylvia Bailey-Charles	HEFS Program Manager	sylvia.bailey-charles@dc.gov
Kenneth Howard	HEFS Operations Manager	kenneth.howard@dc.gov
John B. Parham, II	HEFS Director	john.parham@dc.gov

C. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Application

Q: How do I apply for DCTAG, DCLEAP and/or the DC Adoption Scholarship online?
A: You may apply for all three DC financial aid grant programs by completing a DC OneApp at www.seo.dc.gov.

Q: If I received the awards in previous years, do I have to apply for the program every year?
A: Yes. The DC financial aid grant programs must be applied for each year by completing a DC OneApp and submitting the required documents.

Q: I submitted my application and need to make changes to the information, but I can only review my application. How can I get changes made to my application?
A: Once you submit your application, you must contact the State Education Office (SEO) to speak with your counselor to have changes made to your application. [See the Counselor Assignment table above.]

Q: When is it too late to apply for DCTAG, DCLEAP and DC Adoption?
A: The deadline for DC OneApp application is June 30 of each year. Any completed application submitted after the deadline will be placed on a waiting list. This can significantly reduce the chances of receiving funding as the District of Columbia grant programs are processed on a first-come, first-serve basis.

College Information

Q: I am not sure what college I am going to attend. Should I wait until I know before completing my DC OneApp? Or, should I leave the college/university question blank?

A: The DC OneApp must contain the applicant's college/university of choice to complete the application; however, if applicants are undecided about their final college/university, the SEO recommends selecting a top school choice. This information can be changed, if necessary.

Dependency

Q: Since I file my own taxes, can I apply as an independent applicant?

A: The DC grant programs adhere to the rules of the U.S. Department of Education, which states that you are independent if you:
1. Are 24 years of age or older;
2. Are a Ward of the State;
3. Have parents or guardians who are incarcerated or incapacitated;
4. Have children who receive more than 1/2 of their support from you;
5. Are a member of the Armed Forces;
6. Are married; and,
7. Are not claimed as a dependent on someone else's D-40 income tax return, TANF payment, or other forms of non-taxable income.

Q: My parent(s) have no income and do not file taxes. What other supporting documentation are acceptable?

A: Please contact your assigned counselor to discuss this.

Q: My parent(s) claimed me on their tax return, but do not have any utility bills because my parent(s) live with my grandmother. What do I provide for utilities?

A: You may provide a notarized letter from your grandmother stating that your parent/guardian lives with her and submit copies of two current utility bills, bank statements, and/or pay stubs (less than 45 days old) reflecting your grandmother's name and address.

Q: My parents are not around and I live with my grandmother. Can she claim me on her taxes?

A: Yes. If your grandmother provides more than fifty percent of your support and you are 24 years of age or younger, she can claim you as a dependent of her tax return. When providing your grandmother's Certified D-40 be sure to include the Schedule S "Supplemental Information and Dependents."

Eligibility

Q: I graduated high school in 2004. Am I eligible to apply for the DCTAG, DCLEAP or DC Adoption?

A: Yes. As long as you are not older than 24 years of age (DCTAG/DCAS only) and you resided in the District of Columbia for 12 months prior to your first college semester and continue to be domiciled in the District while attending college may apply for DCTAG, DCLEAP and DC Adoption.

Q: If my high school is outside of DC, am I still eligible for the DC grant programs?

A: The location of your high school has no bearing on your domicile eligibility. For DCTAG, DCLEAP and DC Adoption (DCAS) if your high school is outside of the District, but you are a District resident (for dependent applicants, your parents/guardians are a resident) you are eligible for the DC grant programs.

Q: If my parent(s) do not live in DC, but I go to school in DC can I apply for the DC grant programs?

A: No. Eligibility for DCTAG and DCLEAP require that you are a District of Columbia resident. As a dependent, your domicile is established by your parent's primary place of residence. The location of your high school has no bearing on your domicile. If your parents do not reside in the District of Columbia, then you are not a District resident. For DC Adoption Scholarship applicants (adopted students only), domicile is not a requirement. [See DCAS' Criteria, page 5.]

Q: I completed high school outside of the USA. My family and I moved here from Germany. Am I eligible to apply for the DC grant programs?

A: Where you graduate HS has no bearing on your eligibility for the DC grant programs. However, DCTAG and DCLEAP applicants must have been a District of Columbia resident 12 months prior to their first college semester with domicile maintained throughout their college education. For DC Adoption Scholarship applicants (adopted students only), domicile is not a requirement. [See DCAS' Criteria, page 5.]

Q: Can graduate students apply for the DC grant programs?

A: No. All three District of Columbia's financial aid grant programs are designed to assist with costs towards the completion of an undergraduate degree.

Q: I am attending a proprietary institution [i.e. Strayer, DEVRY, Nyack etc.]. Am I eligible to apply for financial assistance through the grant programs?

A: No. Students attending for-profit proprietary schools are not eligible to participate in any of the DC grant programs.

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)/Student Aid Report (SAR)

Q: I am not applying for any federal loans or grants. Why do I have to complete a FAFSA and submit a SAR?

A: DCTAG, DCLEAP, and DC Adoption scholarship are federally funded programs and therefore we comply with recommendations set forth by the U.S. General Accounting Office (GAO). To ensure compliance with federal eligibility requirements, such as citizenship, selective service registration (for males 18 years of age and over) valid social security numbers, etc., the SEO requires that all applicants complete the FAFSA and provide a SAR.

Q: I would like to take only a few classes. Am I eligible to apply for financial assistance through the grant programs?

A: No. Students must be enrolled in an undergraduate degree-granting program.

Q: I submitted a print out of my FAFSA to the SEO and received a letter requesting a SAR. Why?

A: After completion of the FAFSA, you will immediately be able to access a 'Print Summary' of the information you submitted. This is not the same as the SAR print summary. The SAR print summary is validation by the US Department of Education that the information submitted through FAFSA is accurate. [See Page 32 for an example of the SAR print summary.]

Q: My FAFSA PIN is not working, how do I get another one?

A: To have your PIN sent to you by FAFSA, visit their website at www.fafsa.ed.gov. Click on "View" and "Print Your Student Aid Report" and follow all subsequent directions. Or, call FAFSA at 1-800-433-3243.

Q: My EFC has a "C" after the figure. Why is this the case and what can I do?

A: A "C" after your Estimated Family Contribution (EFC) figure is a flag suggesting that a correction and/or clarification is required. Your FAFSA will provide an explanation of the corrections needed under the section title "Corrections That Need To Be Made." You must make the correction and/or provide the clarification to FAFSA either online or by contacting FAFSA at 800-433-3243.

Q: Does my EFC number impact how much funding I will receive from the DC grant programs?

A: The Estimated Family Contribution (EFC) figure has an impact on your DCLEAP award priority and funding because the DCLEAP is a financial need-based program. Your EFC figure has no impact on your award priority for DCTAG and DC Adoption scholarship since they are not financial need-based programs.

Q: How is my EFC number calculated?

A: The U.S. Department of Education uses the information included in the FAFSA to determine the EFC. For more information, please contact FAFSA at 800-433-3243.

Funding

Q: I understand that these grants may not cover all of my college costs. How can I get information about other forms of financial assistance?

A: The State Education Office has a Private Scholarship Database that provides information on scholarships and grants. This database can be found at www.seo.dc.gov.

Q: Will I receive one award letter for all grants?

A: You will receive an award letter for each grant for which you have applied and deemed eligible.

Log On – Password

Q: I forgot my password. How do I get another?

A: To have your username and temporary password e-mailed to you, visit the DC OneApp website at www.seo.dc.gov and click on the "Forgot Your Password." Once you provide the required information, your username and a temporary password along with instructions on how to change your password will be sent to the e-mail address provided on your application. [See Page 29 for further information.]

Payment

Q: How can I know what my DCTAG grant amount will be?

A: For public institutions, DCTAG pays up to $10,000 per academic year to cover the difference between in-state and out-of-state tuition. Consult your college/university to learn the amount of in-state and out-of-state tuition and calculate the difference between the two tuition fees. For private Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU), community colleges, and private colleges/universities in the Washington, DC metropolitan area DCTAG will pay up to $2,500 per academic year or up to $1,250 per academic semester based on enrollment status.

Q: My school sent me a bill, but I received an award letter. Why did the school send me a bill?

A: Awards amounts received from the District Government programs may not cover the total tuition cost of your college or university.

Q: My school sent me a letter that says my DCTAG and/or DCLEAP was denied, but I have an award letter for DCTAG and/or DCLEAP. Why did I receive a denial letter from my school?

A: These denial letters can either be for the DCTAG or DCLEAP. They do not always mean both programs were denied. Contact your school for clarification.

Q: When will I get my DCTAG, DCLEAP or DC Adoption payment?

A: DCTAG and DCLEAP are paid directly to the school once the State Education Office (SEO) receives the school's invoices. Most schools submit invoices after the last date in which a student can add or drop a class. Students should contact their schools for account crediting information.

Q: How long does it take payment to get to my school?

A: Payments take approximately 30 business days, upon receipt of the college or university's invoice.

Q: If I do not spend all of my grant money, could I get the remaining amount as a refund?

A: No. D.C. financial aid grants are provided based upon actual time enrolled at an eligible college or university until a student reaches the eligibility limit.

Registration

Q: I tried to register online but got an error message that said "User Already Exists." What should I do?

A: If you received an error message that said "User Already Exists" you have, at sometime in the past, already registered. If you do not recall your password and username, please refer to the previous question, "I have forgotten my password, how do I get another?"

Q: I tried to register online but got an error message that said, "Data entered does not match the available data in DC OneApp. Please contact SEO for further assistance." Why?

A: An error message that states: "Data entered does not match the available data in DC OneApp. Please contact SEO for further assistance." means that information you provided during registration does not match the information provided in a previous application [For example, the discrepancy may be as simple as the misspelling of your name, incorrect birth date or social security number, or a different e-mail address.] Your HEFS counselor can assist in identifying the problem and making necessary changes.

Required Documents

Affirmation Statement

Q: I am attending school out of state. Should my parent sign the Affirmation and Disclaimer statement on my behalf?

A: No. As both the Affirmation and Legal Disclaimer are for the student applicant, both documents must be verified by evidence of the student's signature. (Please note that for dependent applicants, a parent/guardian must also sign the Affirmation Statement.)

Domicile - Certified D-40

Q: I filed an extension for last year's taxes, what can I do to satisfy the requirement for a certified D-40?

A: If you are a dependent student and your parent/guardian filed an extension for last year's taxes, a certified District of Columbia extension along with a certified D-40 from the previous year will satisfy the Certified D-40 requirement. (Please note once a certified D-40 is filed, a copy must be provided to the State Education Office.)

Q: Can I use my Federal tax to apply for the DC grant programs?

A: No. Only the certified D-40 can provide proof of domicile in the District of Columbia.

Q: I submitted a D-40 tax return with my application and received a request from the SEO for a certified D-40. Why?

A: A D-40 without certification from the Office of Tax & Revenue does not verify that the return was a valid District of Columbia tax return. You provided an uncertified D-40.

Q: Can I fax the Office of Tax & Revenue (OTR) Authorization Form?

A: No. The OTR Authorization Form must be mailed or hand delivered to the SEO (with your supporting documents) in their original form with an original signature.

Domicile – Social Security

Q: I submitted a Social Security statement with my application and received a request from the SEO for a SSI document. Why?

A: The Social Security statement must include 12 months of continuous benefits for the previous calendar year. [For example, the 2007-2008 academic year must have a Social Security statement from the 2006 calendar year.]

Domicile - Utilities

Q: I submitted two utility bills with my DC OneApp and received a request from the SEO for utility bills. Why?

A: The two proofs of utility bills used to complete your DC OneApp must be current and may include bank statements or pay stubs. Both proofs must be less than 45 days old and reflect the applicant's name and address. If the utility bills submitted do not fill all the criteria, they will not be considered valid.

Schools

Q: How do I find out if the schools I am considering are eligible to participate in the DC grant programs?

A: To learn if the school(s) you are considering are eligible to participate in the DC grant programs, visit www.seo.dc.gov and follow the link to Higher Education Financial Services, Apply For Grants Online. Chose the program(s) you believe you are eligible for and click on that program(s) "Eligible Schools" link.

Q: Am I allowed to take online classes using the DC OneApp funding?

A: Yes. If the online classes you are interested in studying are offered by a DC OneApp eligible school and are billed by that school, the DC OneApp will fund the online classes. The online classes must be part of the curriculum toward the completion of an undergraduate degree.

Q: If I am a student at an approved school and I study outside the USA for one semester, will I receive my grant funds for the semester?

A: If the course of study abroad is approved and billed by a DC OneApp eligible school, the DC OneApp will fund the study abroad.

Q: My school is threatening to drop my classes because they did not receive DCTAG funds. Can they do that?

A: The DCTAG Program Participation Agreement (PPA) entered into by the DC State Education Office and a participating college and/or university states that if a student is eligible for DCTAG funding, the college and/or university must consider that funding amount when determining a student's balance due. An eligible student will not be held liable for forthcoming DC grant program payments. If the only outstanding balance on a student's account is forthcoming DC grant program payments, a school cannot drop that student's classes. [Please note that balances due beyond the DC grant program funds are the student's responsibility and a college and/or university has the discretion to treat that balance in accordance with the rules and regulations of their college and/or university.] Please contact the SEO for assistance.

Status

Q: Once my application is complete and all required documents have been provided to the SEO. How long before I hear from the SEO?

A: See Page 55, Section I.D. Next Steps, for application processing timeline .

Q: How can I find out the status of my DC OneApp?

A: Visit https://hefs.seo.dc.gov/appforms/seo_Log On.aspx and click on the link, Review Status and Print Documents, to check status of your application. You may also contact your assigned SEO counselor.

Web Not Submitted

Q: I answered all the questions in the DC OneApp and got an e-mail stating that my application is Web Not Submitted?

A: If all required questions were answered in the DC OneApp and the application is Web Not Submitted, the status usually represents that either the Online Survey was not completed or the submitted button was not clicked. In either event, it is recommended that the applicant follow the instructions included in the Web Not Submitted notice to complete the DC OneApp.

D. GLOSSARY OF TERMS

DCAS: District of Columbia Adoption Scholarship program.

DCLEAP: District of Columbia Leveraging Educational Assistance Partnership program.

DCTAG: District of Columbia Tuition Assistance Grant program.

Eligible: Once an application has been successfully submitted and a SEO supervisor reviews it and determines that all program criteria have been satisfied, the application's status is 'Eligible.' An 'Eligible' status allows the student to participate in their respective program(s) for grant awards.

EPSR (Eligible Pending Supervisory Review): 'EPSR' is a status that is designated to an applicant file once the file has been reviewed by the assigned counselor and determined to be complete after review of the application and all required supporting documents are reviewed.

FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid): FAFSA is used to apply for federal student aid for colleges or career schools and for most state and institutional aid. The DC State Education Office (SEO) uses the Student Aid Report, generated by the FAFSA, to verify citizenship, Selective Service registration, Social Security number, and identity, etc.

HEFS (Higher Education Financial Services): A department within the DC State Education Office, which administers the DCTAG, DCLEAP and DCAS programs.

Inactive: An application becomes 'Inactive' when the application has been incomplete for sixty (60) days.

Incomplete: An application is considered 'Incomplete' when all required documents to complete the application have not been provided to the SEO.

Ineligible: If an application is considered 'Ineligible' if a SEO Supervisor determines that application the application does not met the respective program(s) eligibility criteria.

In Process: An application is provided an 'In Process' status once the application has been successfully 'Submitted' and viewed by an HEFS counselor. Once 'In Process' an application can no longer be edited by the applicant and may only be reviewed and printed. If a change to the application is necessary the applicant should contact a HEFS counselor.

Office of Tax and Revenue (OTR) Authorization Form: The SEO and the District of Columbia Office of Tax and Revenue (OTR) have formed a partnership that allows OTR to verify certification of a D-40 tax return. The OTR Authorization form gives the SEO the authority to request that OTR verify if an applicant or their parent/legal guardian has filed taxes with the District of Columbia. This verification can only be accomplished with the approval of the applicant/parent/guardian. Please note, the DC Office of Tax and Revenue will not begin to review the OTR Authorization forms until after April 15, 2007. The OTR Authorization form is provided as a convenience to the applicant, but may not result in a speedy eligibility determination.

Proprietary Schools: Proprietary schools are generally private educational institutions that are for-profit. These institutions are not eligible to receive funding for DCTAG, DCLEAP nor DC Adoption Scholarships. Visit www.seo.dc.gov to obtain a list of schools that are eligible to receive funding.

SAP: Satisfactory Academic Progress is an academic standing based on grade point average (GPA) that meets a college's or universities requirements.

SAP Form: The Satisfactory Academic Progress Towards Graduation form is used for high school seniors who have not yet graduated and received their high school diplomas. A high school counselor verifies that the student has Satisfactory Academic Progress and is expected to graduate.

SAR: The Student Aid Report is generated by the completion of the FAFSA report and reflects verification by the U.S. Department of Education of all information contained in the FAFSA application.

SEO: The DC State Education Office is the District of Columbia's agency charged with managing the Education Licensure Commission, Education Programs, DC Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness, Higher Education Financial Services, Nutrition Services, Policy, Research & Analysis and Public Charter School Financing & Support.

Submitted: A 'Submitted' application is one that has been completed and successfully submitted online. The "Submit" button has been selected and all required questions have been answered.

Request for Information (RFI): If an application is determined to be incomplete an SEO counselor will mail or e-mail a "Request For Information." The applicant has 60 days to fulfill the requirements before the application is given a status of "Inactive".

Waiting List - After Deadline: Applications that are successfully submitted and all required documents provided after the DC OneApp deadline (the last Friday of each June) will be given a status of 'Wait List - After Deadline.' These applicants will not be removed from the wait list unless program funding is available and until students with an "Eligible" and status are awarded.

Waiting List - On Time: Applications that are successfully submitted and all required documents provided prior to the DC OneApp deadline (the last Friday of each June); but subsequent to an overwhelming number of completed applications having been received by the SEO will gain the 'Wait List - On Time' status as all current funds have been obligated as a result of DCTAG and DCLEAP funds being on a first come first serve basis. In the event additional funds become available 'Wait List - On Time' applications will be reviewed by an SEO supervisor and are determined Eligible (based on fund availability), Incomplete or Ineligible. These applicants will not be removed from the wait list if program funding is available or until students with an "Eligible" status are awarded. Applications with a "Wait List On Time" status have a higher priority over applications with a "Wait List After the Deadline" status.

Web Not Submitted: Applications that started online, but have not been completed and successfully Submitted will display the "Web Not Submitted" status. A Web Not Submitted application has sixty (60) days to be completed and successfully "Submitted" before it is assigned "Inactive."
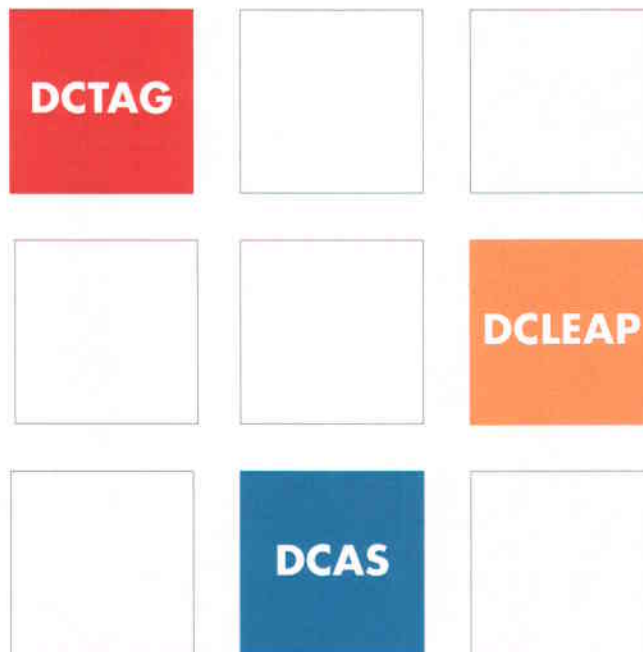
¡Hablamos su idioma!

我們可以講您的語言!

Chúng tôi nói ngôn ngữ của bạn!

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202.727.6436

DCTAG

DCLEAP

DCAS

DC ONEAPP MANUAL

2007–2008

★★★ DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
State Education Office